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CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

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Instead of Reading It, Listen to It...

Secretary of State Debra Bowen Unveils Downloadable Audio Version of Voter Information Guide

SACRAMENTO – To brush up on the issues before Election Day, California voters need only fire up their laptops, iPods, or Zunes, now that the Secretary of State's office has launched a downloadable audio version of its Official Voter Information Guide.

"Many people may not read the voter information guide, but they still want to learn about the important issues on the statewide ballot," said Secretary of State Debra Bowen, California's chief elections officer. "The new, downloadable audio version of the voter guide allows people to catch up on elections issues while driving to work, multi-tasking at home, or working out at the gym."

The new downloadable version of the Official Voter Information Guide is available online at <http://www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov/audio/>.

"The downloadable audio guide won't knock 'Politics Lost' off the list of best-selling audio books," Bowen continued. "However it will be a real boon to voters who are visually impaired and to anyone who processes information better by listening to it rather than by reading it."

The Official Voter Information Guide, produced by the Secretary of State's office, offers voters a wealth of information to prepare them for voting. It includes the full text of each ballot proposition, arguments for and against them, and analysis of each from the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst.

The guide also provides useful information on registering to vote, voting by mail, voter rights, options available to voters who decline to state a political party, provisional balloting, finding a polling place, and becoming a poll worker.

Paper versions of the voter guide will begin landing in voter mailboxes later this month. The guide is produced in English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese and is available online in all seven languages at <http://www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov/>. It is also offered in large-print and audiocassette formats. Those versions of the guide can be ordered at http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_vig_altformats.htm or by calling 1-800-345-VOTE.

The last day for eligible Californians to register to vote in the June 3 Statewide Direct Primary Election is May 19. The last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot is May 27.

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